

§ 838.502 Expressly dividing a refund of employee contributions.

(a) A court order directed at a refund of employee contributions is not a court order acceptable for processing unless it expressly awards a former spouse a portion of a refund of employee contributions as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) To expressly award a former spouse a portion of a refund of employee contributions as required by paragraph (a) of this section, the court order must—

(1) Identify the retirement system using terms that are sufficient to identify the retirement system as explained in § 838.611; and

(2) Expressly state that the former spouse is entitled to a portion of a refund of employee contributions using terms that are sufficient to identify the refund of employee contributions as explained in § 838.612.

§ 838.503 Providing for payment to the former spouse.

(a) A court order directed at a refund of employee contributions is not a court order acceptable for processing unless it provides for OPM to pay a portion of a refund of employee contributions to the former spouse as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) To provide for OPM to pay a portion of a refund of employee contributions to the former spouse as required by paragraph (a) of this section, the court order must—

(1) Expressly direct OPM to pay the former spouse directly;

(2) Direct the employee or separated employee to arrange or to execute forms for OPM to pay the former spouse directly; or

(3) Be silent concerning who is to pay the portion of the refund of employee contributions awarded to the former spouse.

(c) Although paragraphs (b)(2) and (b)(3) of this section provide acceptable methods for satisfying the requirement that the court order provide for OPM to pay the former spouse, OPM strongly recommends that the court order expressly direct OPM to pay the former spouse directly.

§ 838.504 OPM computation of formulas.

(a) A court order directed at a refund of employee contributions is not a court order acceptable for processing unless the court order provides sufficient instructions and information so that OPM can compute the amount of the former spouse's share of the refund of employee contributions using only the express language of the court order, subparts A, D, and F of this part, and information from normal OPM files.

(b) To provide sufficient instructions and information that OPM can compute the amount of the former spouse's share of the refund of employee contributions as required by paragraph (a) of this section requires that the court order state the former spouse's share as—

(1) A fixed amount;

(2) A percentage or a fraction of the refund of employee contributions; or

(3) A formula that does not contain any variables whose values are not readily ascertainable from the face of the court order or normal OPM files.

(c) A court order directed at a refund of employee contributions is not a court order acceptable for processing if OPM would have to examine a State statute or court decision (on a different case) to understand, establish, or evaluate the formula for computing the former spouse's share of the refund of employee contributions.

§ 838.505 Barring payment of refunds.

A court order barring payment of a refund of employee contributions is not a court order acceptable for processing unless—

(a) It expressly directs OPM not to pay a refund of employee contributions;

(b) It awards, or a prior court order acceptable for processing has awarded, the former spouse a former spouse survivor annuity or a portion of the employee annuity; and

(c) Payment of the refund of employee contributions would prevent payment to the former spouse under the court order described in paragraph (b) of this section.